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# Agri-News

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **TENNESSEE PRODUCERS BATTLE MOTHER NATURE IN 2002**

The Tennessee Agricultural Statistics Service released the results of its June 1 survey this morning, revealing that producers will have more acres of **soybeans, corn, and sorghum** than last year while reducing **cotton, wheat, tobacco, and hay** acreage. According to Debra Kenerson, State Statistician, "It has been a year of extremes thus far for Tennessee farmers. Those in the West have struggled with fields flooding, while many in Middle and East Tennessee have not had enough rain. In addition, the entire state had below normal temperatures the last half of May with many areas experiencing a frost. Cool, wet weather in May contributed to seedling disease, forcing many cotton producers to replant thousands of acres, and heavy rains flooded many acres of crops planted along low-lying river and creek bottoms." Survey results showed **soybean** acreage of 1.15 million acres, 6 percent more than 2001, while **corn** acreage increased slightly to 690,000 acres. **Sorghum**, at 35,000 acres, is also up from the previous year. **Tobacco** acreage, at 35,900, showed the largest percentage decrease from 2001, down 10 percent, followed by **cotton**, down 6 percent to 580,000 acres. Acreage planted to **wheat** was down 2 percent to 490,000 acres, while acres of all **hay** harvested is down slightly to 2.09 million.

### **COTTON ACREAGE DECLINES FROM 2001**

The State's cotton acreage declined 6 percent from 2001 to an estimated 580,000 acres. Although planting began on schedule in mid-April, this spring has been a difficult one for Tennessee cotton producers, as unfavorably cool weather in May kept soil temperatures well below ideal. In addition, excessive rainfall in some areas led to planting delays and acreage loss due to flooding. As much as 30 percent of the acreage had to be re-planted due to seedling disease. By the third week of May, planting progress was almost a week behind normal at 61 percent complete, the latest planted crop since 1991. Planting was essentially finished by the first week of June with crop development lagging slightly behind normal. Currently, the crop is rated in mostly fair to good condition with approximately a fourth of the acreage still suffering from earlier setbacks.

### **SOYBEAN ACREAGE UP 6 PERCENT**

Tennessee's 2002 soybean acreage is estimated at 1.15 million acres, up 6 percent from last year's 1.08 million. Area for harvest is estimated at 1.12 million acres, up 7 percent from 2001. Part of the increase in acreage from last year and March Intentions is a result of acreage which was previously idle or planted to another crop now being planted to soybeans. Producers planted thousands of acres of soybeans in cotton fields that were lost to disease or flooding that could not be re-planted to cotton. As of June 23, nearly 90 percent of the crop had been planted, behind last year's rapid pace, but ahead of the 5-year average. The crop was rated in mostly fair to good condition.

### **HIGHEST CORN ACREAGE SINCE 1998**

Tennessee's corn acreage is estimated at 690,000 acres, up 10,000 acres from 2001 and the highest planted acreage in 4 years. Corn planting got underway on time this spring, but development was slowed during May due to unseasonable cool, wet weather. The crop, however, was rated in mostly good to excellent condition throughout the month of May, despite difficulties with insects, freezing temperatures, and wet fields. River flooding along the Mississippi claimed thousands of acres of corn during the month. By the third week of June, the crop was progressing ahead of normal with 32 percent of the crop in the silking stage. Currently, the crop is rated in mostly good to excellent condition, but many areas are beginning to need rain as it enters this critical pollination stage.

**(OVER)**

TOBACCO ACREAGE CONTINUES DECLINE

The State’s 2002 tobacco acreage will decline almost 4,000 acres from a year ago to 35,900 acres. By type, harvested acres for Tennessee’s Type 31 **Burley** crop is expected to be 30,000, down 6 percent; Type 22 **Eastern dark-fired**, at 5,000 acres, down 23 percent; Type 23 **Western dark-fired**, at 400 acres, down 23 percent; and Type 35 **One-sucker**, at 500 acres, down 25 percent. Transplanting began on schedule the first week of May, but was about a week behind normal by mid-month due to wet, cool conditions. Overall, transplanting is now ahead of the 5-year average, but producers haven’t been able to spread out their plantings as much as they would have liked, which helps them optimize both barn space and labor. Some fields were lost due to a frost during the third week of May, but most producers were able to replant. Scarceness of quota and transplanting supplies has been a problem for many burley producers this year and growers of dark types have also struggled to find enough allotment.

WHEAT ACREAGE LOWEST IN 9 YEARS

Tennessee growers seeded a total of 490,000 acres last fall, down 2 percent from last year and the lowest level since 1993. Area to be harvested for grain, at 330,000, is down 10,000 acres from 2001. The remaining 160,000 acres sown were used as a cover crop, cut for hay, or harvested for silage. Dry conditions last fall caused delays in seeding the 2002 crop and kept many producers from planting all their intended acreage. A cold front hit the State the second week of April, causing minor freeze damage in some fields, while wet weather in May resulted in several leaf-type diseases, including glume blotch and leaf rust. The crop was rated in mostly good condition throughout the growing season. As of the week ending June 23, virtually the entire crop was ripe, with harvest progress ahead of normal at 82 percent.

HAY ACREAGE DOWN FROM 2001

Producers intend to harvest 2.085 million hay acres during 2002, down 50,000 acres from last year. All **other hay** is estimated at 2.05 million, down 50,000 acres, while **alfalfa** hay is an estimated 35,000 acres, the same as last year. Hay harvest got underway on schedule in most areas during late April and the first part of May. Wet conditions through much of May, however, caused numerous delays and progress lagged well behind normal. More seasonable weather during the first half of June has allowed producers to make excellent progress. Currently, 96 percent of other hay has been cut, in line with an average pace, while the first cutting of alfalfa is complete.

PLANTED AND HARVESTED ACRES OF PRINCIPAL CROPS: TENNESSEE AND U.S., 2001-2002

Crop	Planted Acres		Harvested Acres		
	2001	2002	2001	2002	2002 / 2001
	1,000 Acres		Percent		
TENNESSEE					
Corn	680	690	620	620	100
Cotton	620	580	615	<sup>1</sup>	-
Soybeans	1,080	1,150	1,050	1,120	107
Winter Wheat	500	490	340	330	97
Sorghum	30	35	27	31	115
Hay, all	-	-	2,135	2,085	98
Alfalfa	-	-	35	35	100
All other	-	-	2,100	2,050	98
Tobacco, all	-	-	39.69	35.90	90
Eastern dark-fired (22)	-	-	6.50	5.00	77
Western dark-fired (23)	-	-	.52	.40	77
Burley (31)	-	-	32.00	30.00	94
One sucker (35)	-	-	.67	.50	75
UNITED STATES					
Corn	75,752	78,947	68,808	72,081	105
Cotton <sup>2</sup>	15,768.5	14,415.5	13,827.7	<sup>1</sup>	-
Soybeans	74,105	72,993	73,000	72,029	99
Winter Wheat	41,078	41,362	31,295	29,764	95
Sorghum	10,252	9,290	8,584	7,908	92
Hay, all	-	-	63,511	64,709	102
Alfalfa	-	-	23,812	24,134	101
All other	-	-	39,699	40,575	102
Tobacco, all	-	-	432.40	435.36	101
Eastern dark-fired (22)	-	-	9.80	7.50	77
Western dark-fired (23)	-	-	3.62	2.80	77
Burley (31)	-	-	164.30	161.40	98
One sucker (35)	-	-	3.42	2.70	79

<sup>1</sup>Estimate to be released August 12, 2002. <sup>2</sup>U.S. acreage includes American Pima cotton.